



## **Funding Opportunity Announcement**

### **FY24 Solar Technical Assistance Program**

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<b>Program Description:</b>	The FY24 Solar Technical Assistance Program (the “Program”) provides technical assistance to state and local government public entities for solar site surveys and to conduct preliminary development of solar projects.
<b>Type of Program:</b>	MEA provides technical assistance via the Maryland Environmental Service, free of charge, to the public entity. It is a Non-competitive (first-come, first-served) program.
<b>Application Deadline:</b>	Friday, March 15, 2024, at 5:00 p.m.
<b>Eligible Applicants:</b>	This Program is limited to state and local government entities (Counties/Cities/Municipalities), public universities, community colleges, and public schools, for projects that will be located on existing infrastructure such as buildings, parking lots and already developed properties.
<b>Eligible Activities:</b>	<p>This Program provides the services listed under the “List of Services Available” (below). With rare exceptions, the Program does not provide technical assistance for the Request for Proposal (RFP) development, detailed design and construction of a specific project. The technical assistance is designed to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Conduct solar site assessments on government owned or controlled buildings and previously disturbed land,</li><li>2. Where resiliency is needed, provide limited technical assistance to help determine the sizing and rough design of a microgrid system,</li><li>3. Provide detailed technical support for a limited set of specific engineering problems,</li><li>4. Provide a limited set of data analytic services,</li><li>5. Provide free technical assistance for solar project reviews, or in certain circumstances, owner representative services (See List of Technical Assistance That May Be Requested section below).</li></ol>
<b>Program Budget:</b>	MEA anticipates providing up to \$400,000 of technical assistance through the Maryland Environmental Service and its Technical Assistance provider(s).

Technical services are normally expected to be less than \$10,000 for an individual project. However, MEA is open to larger scale projects that seek opportunities for solar opportunities across larger building portfolios (either with the application or after MES develops the technical assistance estimate). An application that exceeds this funding goal will require additional justification.

**Minimum Criteria:**

To be considered for technical assistance, the Applicant must submit a complete application which includes a discussion of:

1. The technical assistance required,
2. How the technical assistance report will be used (how it becomes a project),
3. Constraints that could limit solar location,
4. A detailed description of the final technical assistance report being requested.

In addition:

- The Applicant must submit required documents,
- The Applicant must sign a Letter of Agreement (with MEA) agreeing to provide access and information required so the Technical Assistance provider(s) can carry out their work,
- Buildings and/or properties must be owned by a state or local government entity; or have a lease by the state or local government with more than 15 years remaining on its lease,

**Review Process:**

Project applications will be forwarded to the Maryland Environmental Service to assign to a Technical Assistance provider(s) and to receive a quote for service. A review team, selected by the Program Manager and consisting of at least 3 members, will review the application and all supporting documents. If, after evaluation, a majority of the review team determines that: 1) the project meets the criteria specified above; and 2) makes a compelling case, from an energy policy perspective, the review team will recommend the project for funding. If a majority of the review team determines that the minimum criteria is met, but the Applicant does not make a compelling case for funding, the project will not be recommended for funding. Each recommendation to not fund a project that meets minimum criteria will automatically be reviewed by the Director of Energy Programs.

If the project is recommended for funding and the MEA Program Manager accepts the quote, then the Letter of Agreement (signed by the Director) is sent to the Applicant for signature. Once signed, the work will commence.

**Partial awards:**

MEA may adjust the application for technical assistance if the request exceeds the scope of allowable assistance under the Program or would

result in a quote that would exceed the \$10,000 limit for technical assistance. MEA will make reasonable efforts to confer with the Applicant and MES before making a significant adjustment to the scope of a technical assistance request.

**Required Application Documents:**

- A completed application,
- A cover letter describing the technical assistance request, any pertinent factors to explain the scope of the requested report, and a statement showing the Applicant's commitment to signing the Letter of Agreement with MEA (which includes a commitment to providing access to the project site and to necessary information).
- A site map that highlights the location of the building(s) and property that should be considered, as well as any relevant surrounding area that may have bearing on the project. An image from Google Earth © is preferred, however a digital/print photograph is acceptable. As appropriate, include a photo of any issue that should be specifically considered as part of the technical assistance.
- Evidence of the Applicant's control of the project site for at least 15 years, normally in the form of a recorded deed or other appropriate documentation (as determined by MEA).
- The Applicant's IRS Form W-9.

**Submission Instructions:**

MEA encourages the use of electronic applications to streamline processing and reduce environmental impacts. If you cannot apply electronically, please contact MEA no later than seven (7) days prior to the application deadline to identify an alternative method to submit the application.

The application spreadsheet and required documents should be submitted electronically to MEA via email to: **[solar.mea@maryland.gov](mailto:solar.mea@maryland.gov)**. If specifically authorized by MEA, the Applicant should mail the supporting documents to:

Maryland Energy Administration  
Attn: Solar Technical Assistance Program  
1800 Washington Blvd. Suite 755  
Baltimore, MD 21230

**Program-specific Requirements:**

**GENERAL PROGRAM CONSTRUCT**

MEA has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Maryland Environmental Services (MES) to provide technical assistance to public entities for the siting and preliminary development of solar projects. For projects accepted under this Program, MEA will cover the costs of technical assistance provided by MES or a Technical Assistance provider, who will be selected by MES and MEA. The

Application (request for technical assistance) must be submitted by an individual with the authority to bind the Applicant and to submit for consideration a request to include construction of a solar project in the Applicant's budget and, as relevant, in the Applicant's energy plan.

## **ACCESS TO DATA**

To ensure that necessary data will be available to MES and its Technical Assistance provider(s), the Applicant will need to sign a Letter of Agreement with MEA agreeing to provide data needed to provide technical services. The requested data should already be available to the Applicant and should not require new research or impose additional cost (beyond the time and effort needed to collect the existing data).

## **LIST OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE THAT MAY BE REQUESTED**

Assistance in paragraphs 1, 2, and 3a (for a solar canopy) may be requested at the same time. Assistance in paragraphs 3b, 3c, 4 and 5 may only be requested after solar siting has been completed.

### **1. Public and Private Building and Site Solar Assessment Technical Support**

a) Identification and inventory of public or private properties to determine which properties are owned by the applicant, and/or where the applicant has more than 15 years left on its lease.

b) An initial evaluation of buildings identified using satellite and other photographic means, to determine solar access of the roof and the grounds immediately surrounding the building. Evaluation may include the use of a single solar array (or multiple solar arrays) for multiple co-located buildings.

c) A list of proposed buildings and sites that warrant further review, including a description of each building and/or surrounding grounds proposed and the rationale for its recommendation or exclusion.

d) An on-site inspection of a list of identified buildings and/or surrounding grounds for future solar projects and further refinement of the list to include those that most warrant further consideration. The on-site inspections will include:

- Use of a Solmetric SunEye 210 (or equivalent) to evaluate the solar resource,
- Assessment of nearby vegetation to determine if /when encroachment on the solar resource would be expected,
- Coordination with the Applicant to determine the condition of the roof and the approximate date for roof replacement,
- Visual evaluation of the roof support structures to determine if repair or augmentation would be required,
- A proposal for a solar system for use on the building(s), and
- Identification of the percentage of the building's energy usage to be supplied by the proposed solar system.

e) A report, indexed by the building owner/ operator, identifying whether buildings included in the report are recommended, or not recommended, to host an individual solar project. For each project being recommended, the report will include the SunEye pictures, an estimate of the building(s) annual energy usage, and an estimate of the proposed solar array's output using PVWATTS or other solar array energy estimating program.

## 2. Microgrid/Resiliency Hub Technical Support

a) Assistance in identifying the required loads and the appropriately sized solar system to run a specified period of time while independent from the grid.

b) Basic Assistance with microgrid design, support, and control, to include system integration and control system software. Microgrid feasibility studies are properly addressed by applying to the [Resilient Maryland Program](#) (AOI-1)

## 3. Technical Support for Solar Siting Design and Engineering

a) Assistance addressing geology for solar canopies and ground mounted systems.

b) Review of contractor engineering analysis concerning recommended improvements to building structures to allow for proposed solar and battery installation (i.e., a second opinion).

c) Review of documents, bids, plans, project financials and other information provided by the Applicant related to a specific project or portfolio of projects.

## 4. Analytics

a) Data analytic services as needed to include GIS mapping, energy modeling (over time), and financials (to include return on investment (ROI) and net present value (NPV)).

## 5. Solar Project Review and Owner Representative Services

a) Assistance in developing procurement documents, specifications, and other information necessary for a public or private organization to develop requests for proposals or task orders.

b) Supplemental reviews of information, design changes and other aspects of the project through the system's construction and commissioning.

### Questions can be directed to:

**David Comis, Energy Program Manager**

**[David.Comis@Maryland.gov](mailto:David.Comis@Maryland.gov)**

**410-537-4064 (w)**

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